




County Supervisors Association of Arizona

July 18, 2014

Gabriel Nah
Grants Management Specialist
Office of Acquisition and Grants Management
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Mailstop # 7700 Bethesda
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

**Re: Attestation of Support for State of Arizona's Application
State Innovation Models: Round 2 of Funding for Test Assistance**

1. Name of Organization: The County Supervisors Association of Arizona
2. Contact/Representative Name and Title: Mr. Craig Sullivan, Executive Director
3. Address: 1905 W. Washington St., Suite 100, Phoenix, AZ 85009
4. Phone: 602-252-5521 5. Fax: 602-253-3227
6. E-mail address: craigs@countysupervisors.org
7. Signature: 
Authorized Organizational Representative

Section 1: Introduction – Attestation of Support

On behalf of the County Supervisors Association of Arizona (CSA), I wish to extend our support of Arizona's application for Test Funding for the State Innovation Models (SIM) award. CSA believes that Medicaid, the State's largest insurer, is an important lever for driving healthcare delivery transformation. The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) is a model of health innovation and health policy that demonstrates the importance of continuing innovation in the healthcare industry in Arizona.

Arizona counties are facing increasing financial burdens due to behavioral health issues and jail system healthcare costs. These two issues are inextricably linked, as a consequence, individuals with behavioral health issues brought to the criminal justice system are driving up healthcare

costs for counties and the state. Communities as a whole are impacted by undiagnosed and/or untreated behavioral health. Behavioral health issues plague communities across our state, often appearing as homelessness, poverty, alcohol/drug use, unemployment or criminal behavior. Statewide 144,878 persons were served in the public behavioral health system and 40,970 were treated for Severe Mental Illness¹. Each year over 100,000 individuals are released from Arizona County Jails and over half of these people released into the community require treatment for mental health and/or substance abuse².

CSA firmly believes that by improving the healthcare delivery system, especially with behavioral health, in Arizona, we will see reductions in recidivism within our criminal justice system. Over the long term, a lower recidivism rate would reduce the heavy financial burden on county and state taxpayers and promote safer, healthier communities.

Through our support of the SIM award application, we stand with healthcare leaders across Arizona to improve population health and promote system reform.

Section 2: Describe your Organization and its role in system reform currently

CSA is an intergovernmental partnership of Arizona's 15 counties, representing the interests of the 61 elected county supervisors who serve on the county governing boards. County supervisors provide regional leadership over critical policy areas, including policies necessary to ensure safe communities and protect public health. Accordingly the key elements that counties are involved in focus on correctional health and the coordination of the criminal justice system.

Counties provide a variety of medical and behavioral health services to its criminal justice populations, including:

- Medical and behavioral health services to jail inmates and/or juvenile detainees
- Medical discharge planning to jail inmates
- Substance abuse services to adult probationers
- Health care referrals to adult probationers, including for physical, behavioral and substance abuse issues

Counties consistently work on strengthening enrollment and care coordination with AHCCCS. Some of the counties have engaged as follows:

- Maricopa County's Health Care Integration (HCI) division focuses its efforts on streamlining and integrating health care systems and services, reducing duplication of effort and improving cross-departmental communication and service efficiency. The HCI Steering Committee is comprised of County leadership from public health and criminal justice departments, and targeted workgroups tackle specific health care system and service issues critical to citizen health care.

¹ Arizona Department of Health Services: Individuals enrolled in an episode of care, February 2014, http://www.azdhs.gov/bhs/pdf/reports/enroll_pen/enrollment-penetration-2012-2014-sfy.pdf

² Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System

- Maricopa County's HCI's Data Sharing/RBHA Relations Workgroup brings together the County Public Health and criminal justice departments to analyze, recommend and implement systems and processes that support internal data sharing and relationship-building with the Regional Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA) to help reduce barriers to client service delivery while improving continuity of care.
- Some counties work closely with AHCCCS to assure that eligible citizens are afforded benefit coverage as well as continuity of care when life-changing events occur, such as release from jail. For example, a couple counties and AHCCCS have established IGAs that suspend inmate benefits upon booking into the jail and reinstates benefits upon release. Also, counties and AHCCCS work to assure that inmates released from the jail with certain chronic conditions are quickly expedited back onto AHCCCS benefits so that there is no disruption in care.

In order to assist counties, CSA educates and works with our membership on a variety of healthcare delivery issues, including:

- Behavioral health
- Healthcare in the criminal justice system
- Indigent defense
- New state and federal healthcare laws
- AHCCCS programs and resources
- Federal programs and resources

Section 3: Conclusion: Arizona's SIM Grant Application

As we discussed above, county governments across the state are faced with ever expanding costs in behavioral health and the jail system. Through our coordination efforts in our own communities, with state agencies and the federal government, we have worked diligently to improve the behavioral health care delivery system in Arizona. We have come to acknowledge that efforts like addressing super-utilizers, inappropriate use of the emergency department, recidivism in the criminal justice system, care coordination for Arizona's Native American population, among others, cannot be successful if we are not connected and working as one system of care.

Arizona is well-positioned to continue driving innovation by transforming the statewide delivery of care, which will result in the improvement of the health of our citizens, a strengthened, more efficient delivery system, and lower costs.

By combining the commitment and outstanding leadership of AHCCCS, the commitment of multiple stakeholders, like CSA, with the resources of the SIM grant, Arizona is ready to undertake this critical objective and achieve success.